

March Madness??

Welcome

First, a hearty welcome to all our new members! We are seeing an increase in membership over the last few months and we are grateful for all of you who have opted into helping your local league “Defend Democracy.” We are a nonpartisan organization of volunteers focused on voter access and education - we do not support candidates or political parties. We do, however, take positions on issues that are important to our members. Don’t forget to check out our website at alaskalwv.org as well as the main lwv.org US site to find out more.

Based on the amount of people holding signs, attending rallies, ‘empty chair’ meetings, and posting online, it seems that there’s a lot of us mad about something. Now is the time to get involved - find your voice, email, write letters to the editor.

Find out ways to make your voice heard in Congress.

Worried about what is happening to our Federal Government? **Join us for an all-Alaska LWV Virtual Town Hall** on Thursday, March 27th, from 5:30-6:30 pm via Zoom. Our featured speakers, former Senator Mark Begich and Alex Ortiz (former chief of staff to Congressman Young and Congresswoman Peltola), will discuss **how to effectively make our voices heard in Congress**.

This **special edition of “Lunch with the League”** will also provide **resources and guidance** to help us stay engaged and take action on issues impacting all Alaskans. Don’t miss this opportunity to share, learn and get involved! For all league members across Alaska.

Register here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/gh4RSlaWTRC7KOjxq4Fahw>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

And, don't forget - you can always add your voice to let our Senators and Representative know how you feel.

Email Sen. Sullivan at: [https://
www.sullivan.senate.gov/
contact/email](https://www.sullivan.senate.gov/contact/email)

Email Sen. Murkowski at:
[https://
www.murkowski.senate.gov/
contact/email](https://www.murkowski.senate.gov/contact/email)

Email Rep. Begich at: <https://begich.house.gov/contact/email-me>



Statehood for Washington DC! Update**

SJR 6 has been moved out of Committee. Heading to the Rules Committee.

Email your support to senate.State.Affairs@akleg.gov or testify as an Alaskan on why you feel the people in DC need to have a voice.

Elections Bills up again!

The election bills, [SB64 \(Elections\)](#) and [HB43 \(Elections Voting Ballots\)](#) will again be heard next week. The Alaska LWV Board sent a letter of support and Sue Sherif testified on both bills in previous hearings. You can read our letter here: [Support from LWV-AK](#). We urge you to testify or email in support of these bills.

[HB43 \(Elections Voting Ballots\)](#) will be heard again on Tuesday, March 25th. A committee substitute was introduced at the last meeting on March 11th over the objections of Rep. Vance. Rep. Vance pointed out that there are a number of items missing from this bill, including some that found bi-partisan support in an election bill last session. She has said that she will be proposing additional amendments at

future hearings. She also mentioned that Sen. Shower will be addressing the same issues on the SB 64. The hearing on Tuesday should be interesting.

HB21 (Voter Preregistration for Minors) was moved from the House Judiciary Committee on March 17th and referred to the Rules committee.

SB64 (Elections) was heard in Senate State Affairs on March 11th. A new Committee Substitute (CSSB64vH) was adopted. A number of items from the Governor's bill were added, other items changed. Additional hearings on SB64 were held on March 13th where Director of Elections Beecher raised concerns about ballot tracking. While Anchorage can do this as it is a postal hub, other communities do not have that capability. Currently, the Division does track and post when a ballot is received by the Department.

The committee supports a witness signature verification system, but the cost is approximately \$5 million and that is beyond what they can budget for at this time. So they have removed this requirement.

On March 20th, a new work draft was adopted. There have been a number of changes to this bill. They removed preregistration of minors. They added tribal identification to the allowed IDs, but removed fishing and hunting licenses. Stay tuned next week (see Upcoming Meetings below) for more changes, testimony and potential amendments.

Education

HB69 (Education Funding: Increase BSA) was heard in the Senate Education committee on March 17th after passing the House. There was a list of changes coming out of the House from the original bill, and we expect that the Senate will add their own with a goal of reaching an agreement that avoids a Governor's veto.

The current bill increases the cost of education statewide by approximately \$22 million in FY26. This is an increase of \$1,000 of the BSA.

The Senate Education Committee held public and invited testimony on March 19th and 21st. Public testimony was closed in Senate Education on Friday, March 21st. They will continue to discuss next week. You can continue to submit your comments to Senate.Education@akleg.gov.

HB89: Gun Violence Protective Orders

This bill was heard on March 13th. Both invited and public testimony was heard. There were a number of people responding both for and against this bill. There will be another hearing in the future, we'll let you know. In the meantime, public testimony is still encouraged, please make sure you send your opinions on this bill to House.Education@akleg.gov.

Upcoming Meetings - Week of March 10th

Meetings covering our watchlist bills/areas are listed below.

***How to testify:** If you can't attend in person, please call your Legislative Information Office (<http://akleg.gov/lios.php>), and also review the testimony instructions at: https://akleg.gov/docs/pdf/AKLEG_Testimony_Instructions.pdf. If you need further information contact the Juneau Legislative Information office at 907-465-4648.

House Education Committee - (Meets MWF 8:00 am Davis 106)

Send written testimony to: House.Education@akleg.gov

Wednesday, March 26th

HB 105: Public Schools: Mental Health Education

Friday, March 28th

HB 98: Maximum pupil-teacher ratio <Invited and **PUBLIC TESTIMONY**>

House State Affairs Committee - (Meets T TH SA 3:15 pm Gruenberg 120)

Send written testimony to: House.State.Affairs@akleg.gov

Tuesday, March 25th

HB43: Elections Voting Ballots

Thursday, March 27th

HB16: Campaign finance contribution limits

Saturday, March 29th

HB16: Campaign finance contribution limits <**PUBLIC TESTIMONY**>

House Judiciary Committee - (Meets MWF 1:00 pm Gruenberg 120)

Send written testimony to: House.Judiciary@akleg.gov

Senate Education Committee - (Meets MWF 3:30 pm Beltz 105)

Send written testimony to: Senate.Education@akleg.gov

Monday, March 24th, and Wednesday, March 26th

HB69: Education Funding; Increase BSA <Invited testimony only>

Friday, March 28th

Bills already heard (may still include HB69)

Senate State Affairs - (Meets T TH 3:30 pm Beltz 105)

Send written testimony to: Senate.State.Affairs@akleg.gov

Tuesday, March 25th

SB64: Elections - **PUBLIC TESTIMONY** <Time Limit may be set>

Thursday, March 27th

SB64: Elections - **PUBLIC TESTIMONY** <Time Limit may be set>

Legislative Calendar and Events

- March 31, 2025 - Seward's Day
- April 20, 2025 - 90th day of the session (By law (AS 24.05.150))
- May 21, 2025 - 121st day of the session (Per the Alaska Constitution)

Wrap Up/Links

How are we doing?

Let us know! Reach us at alaskalwv@alaskalwv.org, and/or work to get the word out with your local leagues! Board meetings every third Monday at 5:45 pm.

The League always needs volunteers! Writing letters, talking to your legislators, and helping out by giving us your feedback - it doesn't have to be a total commitment.

We would LOVE to hear from you. Please encourage others to take action by sharing this Legislative Newsletter, Action Alerts, and Calendar Events.

Quick links:

- Alaska State Legislature website, akleg.gov
- Alaska State's Gavel to Gavel public affairs TV network, www.ktoo.org/gavel/

You can see your LWV Alaska Board members and Officers and their contact information on the AlaskaLWV.org/Board/ site.

League of Women Voters of Alaska

PO Box 101345
Anchorage, AK 99510-1345

Email us at alaskalwv@alaskalwv.org
www.alaskalwv.org